**Dear Introverts, (An Honest Letter from an Extrovert)**

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Dear Introverts\*,

I was brushing my teeth the other night (this is when I do some of my best thinking), when I realized: almost everyone I’m close to is an introvert. Mouth full of foamy paste, I looked at Varun in surprise, “Varun! Almost all of my close friends are introverts. What are the odds? How does this happen? Oh my poor friends!” I then began listing close friends who are introverts: my husband (ish), my lovely friend Beth, my three hilarious university roommates, my high school friends, even some of my siblings.

(How typically extrovert of me: a whole paragraph about myself and so little written to you, my beloved introverts).

Let me start by saying, I’m sorry. I think I spent about 22 years of my life thinking the whole world was full of Extroverts and Quiet People. In my mind, Quiet People were either shy and needed to be drawn out through my talking at them, or snobby and too cool to be friends with me. Soo, I pretty much operated under the assumption that Quiet People should be treated like extroverts, and they’d eventually come around. You know all of those times that I told a “funny story” about you in public and couldn’t figure out why you were hurt? Remember when I’d ask you a question, wait 5 seconds for you to process and start babbling again? And all the friends I brought home without giving you prior notice?…I really had no clue.

I didn’t mean to embarrass or belittle you, to stress you out, to make you feel rushed or overwhelmed. In my extroversion, I am energized by social interactions, I crave conversation, I think quickly and need very little Amelia time (if any…). I just figured you felt the same way about things.

And so God brought a crowd of introverts into my life, to bear with me patiently, to tell me to shut up (when necessary), to get me to sit still and to show me how to listen, empathize and wait. I’m not gonna lie, there are moments when I look at you and wonder what the heck you could be thinking, how you don’t feel the urge to talk. There are moments when I’m jealous of the way you can spend a day alone, reflecting and processing while I count the seconds until I get to be social again.

‘Cause really, the world is made for extroverts. You must find conferences and student retreats, parties and group meetings as uncomfortable as I found afternoons of silence.

I would like to publicly pledge my support for my Introverted friends. Somehow, someday, I will find a way to filter my words before they come out, and you’ll find me much easier to deal with. But for now, what say we make a truce? You tell me when I’m talking too much, interrupting, getting all up in your space, rushing you…and I’ll try to stop thinking your silence means you hate me and/or are quietly plotting to take over the world. If all else fails, I’ll get this tattooed on my arm.

[](http://eslmarriage.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/introverts.png)

I’d be lying if I said you don’t perplex me. I’ve sometimes sat and tried to act like an introvert, watching a conversation, weighing my words carefully and yearning for time alone. It doesn’t work. I’m not sure how or why you do it, but I obviously like you: I surround myself with introverts. You guys keep me on my toes. So, dear introverts, thank you.

Thank you for your friendship and patience. Thank you for listening, for speaking thoughtfully and for laughing at my inane jokes. If my enthusiasm and energy ever get too much for you, just remember: you can leave the conversation or put in earplugs, but I live with me. (And so does Varun. HA! Poor guy, send him some earplugs if you think of it.)

Your dear, foolish friend,

Amelia